

PARENTS NEED TO ASK:

**WHAT'S BEHIND THE CONSERVATIVE
GOVERNMENT'S ATTACKS ON PUBLIC
EDUCATION?**

**REVISING ONTARIO'S
2015 HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM**



In August 2018, Ontario's Conservative government told elementary teachers it had revised the *2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum*. The sexual health sections the government inserted into the revised curriculum are twenty years old and date back to 1998. The government's revisions minimize information about topics like consent, LGBTQ relationships, gender identities and many other issues related to today's realities. This action undermines the very safety of Ontario's students.

Some have said that the 2015 curriculum was not age appropriate. Research does not support this view. Nor did the majority of parents surveyed after the curriculum was released.

The Conservative government also set up a website inviting parents to anonymously report any concerns regarding teachers and the curriculum.

Ontario has an internationally recognized public education system. But more needs to be done. Chronic underfunding, lack of support for students with special needs and mental health issues, schools that need extensive repairs: these are **real** issues affecting the learning conditions of elementary students, and they need to be addressed by the government.

Instead, the government is using the *2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum*, as well as its 'snitch line', to undermine parents' confidence in public education. By doing that, it's trying to distract parents from focussing on the real issues and holding government accountable for real solutions.

The facts about the curriculum consultation process

- The *2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum* was released by the Ministry of Education following extensive consultation with 4,000 parents, 2,400 educators, 700 students and other education stakeholders.
- In addition police, academics, Children's Aid Societies, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association, the Ontario Health Schools Coalition and the Institute for Catholic Education were also consulted.

A duty to protect all students

Educators are trained professionals who are responsible for ensuring the fundamental human rights of their students are protected. They also have an obligation to create safe and caring school environments for all students, including LGBTQ students.

The government's actions are in direct conflict with teachers' professional obligations. Its actions are also in conflict with Ontario's *Human Rights Code* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Standing together for the modern health curriculum students deserve

There is a groundswell of support from school board trustees, directors of education, principals, health care professionals, LGBTQ organizations, parents, caregivers and students. All are speaking against the government's revisions to the *2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum*. Over 100 organizations, including ETFO, have come together to support a modern and inclusive health curriculum. Check out **WeHaveYourBackOntario.org** for the names of some of those organizations.



THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT'S ATTACK ON PUBLIC EDUCATION IS JUST BEGINNING. WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

A modern health curriculum can save children's lives. Solid research, teaching experience and extensive public consultation all support it. It's what our students deserve and it's what they need to keep them safe.

Know the facts. Make your voice heard by the government.

**TAKE ACTION TO SUPPORT A MODERN HEALTH CURRICULUM.
SEND A MESSAGE TO YOUR MPP AT BUILDINGBETTERSCHOOLS.CA**